

Epicenter

Department of Epidemiology Newsletter

Volume 1 Issue 2 March 2015



Snapshots from winter session 2014-2015 ~Photo submissions by: Erin Comerford, Erin Onstad, Blake Johnson, and Barbra Dickerman



HARVARD
T.H. CHAN

SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Spring 1 Edition

Think Spring!

Happy New Year everyone! As we thaw out from this record breaking winter, let's recap some highlights from the Department of Epidemiology. Our students, staff, and faculty have been busy traveling the globe for research projects, publishing papers (and books!), celebrating anniversaries with the department, and preparing for yet another graduation in May. The department wishes you all the best as you move forward in your academic and professional careers!

Winter Session Abroad...



Student Ambassador Erin Comerford in Brazil,
"Two Brothers" Mountain

"The Brazil winter session course was my favorite Harvard experience to date. The course was comprised of about 15 Harvard Chan students and 15 Brazilian students. Within a few hours of the first day of class, it was clear that this group was special. The diverse experiences and perspectives we all brought to each lecture and project created an incredibly stimulating environment, where we learned more from each other than anything else. We went on several site visits to Fiocruz, a major research center in Rio de Janeiro and home to an impressive infectious disease hospital, and also visited a Family Health Clinic where we heard from community health agents. As if being in Brazil during the month of January wasn't great enough, I cannot believe how much I learned and absorbed in just three short weeks. I can't speak highly enough of the Brazil trip, and I highly recommend the course to all!"

-[Erin Comerford](#), 1st year SM2 student/Ambassador

"I had the incredible opportunity to travel with my advisor, [Dr. Lorelei Mucci](#), to Finland over winter intersession to launch an exciting research project on sleep behaviors and prostate cancer risk as part of the Nordic Twin Study of Cancer (NorTwinCan). I have great interest in sleep duration and quality as they relate to cancer risk and was excited to explore this association in NorTwinCan: the largest twin study in the world and a unique data resource for disentangling the complex genetic and environmental factors potentially implicated in many cancers."

"Along my journey, I had the opportunity to meet and work alongside the prominent researchers and biostatisticians that comprise the NorTwinCan group. Under the guidance of Dr. Jaakko Kaprio (Professor of Genetic Epidemiology, University of Helsinki), I explored the Finnish Twin Cohort dataset, gained insight into the analytic methods that can be employed within twin studies, and began the data analysis for this project. I returned from my trip feeling grateful for the opportunity to work and learn alongside experts in the field as well as inspired to launch my career in cancer epidemiology research. I am excited to continue carrying this project forth here in Boston alongside Drs. Lorelei Mucci and Sarah Coseo Markt."

-Barbra Dickerman, 1st year SM2 student



3:30pm twilight in downtown Helsinki



Blake Johnson with his Burmese colleagues

"Over winter session I went to the Thailand-Myanmar border with the GHP course on humanitarian crises in a refugee setting. The course took place in Umpiem Mai refugee camp, where we partnered with public health students studying at a junior college in the refugee camp. Together with these students, we learned about conducting needs assessments and research in the refugee setting. Over the course of the three weeks, we formed a research team to conduct a needs assessment in the camp, then developed a research project that we are currently running. My research is on a nutritional supplement given to babies in an effort to combat the high rates of chronic malnutrition in camp. Since returning to Boston, we Skype with our research team weekly to check in on data collection and will soon begin data analysis. In the next few weeks, we will communicate our findings to officials in Umpiem Mai refugee camp in an effort to inform practices and improve education about interventions to prevent childhood malnutrition."

-[Blake Johnson](#), 1st year SM2 student

Celebration with the Stars

Congratulations to following members of the Department of Epidemiology who were honored on February 24, 2015 for their years of dedicated service to the Department of Epidemiology, The Harvard Chan School, and most importantly the field of Epidemiology.

5 years

- * [Julie Lyn Batista](#)– Research Associate
- * [Goodarz Danaei](#)– Assistant Professor of Global Health
- * Biling Hong– Statistician II
- * [Dr. Liming Liang](#)– Assistant Professor of Statistical Genetics
- * John Paulson– Associate Director, Graduate Studies
- * [Tyler John VanderWeele](#)– Professor of Epidemiology & Biostatistics

10 years

- * Molly Lyons– Manager of Finances for PHACS

15 years

- * [Dr. Miguel Angel Hernan](#)– Professor of Epidemiology & Biostatistics
- * [Marc Lipsitch](#)– Professor of Epidemiology
- * [Dr. George R. Seage, III](#)– Professor of Epidemiology
- * Claudette M. Thompson– Lab Manager, Lipsitch lab

20 years

- * [Russ B. Hauser](#)– Frederick Lee Hisaw Professor of Reproductive Physiology
- * [Dr. Joel David Schwartz](#)– Professor of Environmental Epidemiology
- * [Dr. Eric Bruce Rimm](#)– Professor of Epidemiology & Nutrition

Department Recognition

The Forum @ Harvard T.H. Chan School

- On Thursday, February 12, 2015, Epi's [Paula Johnson](#) and [JoAnn Manson](#) spoke as expert participants at *The Dr. Lawrence H. and Roberta Cohn Forum* on 'Women and Heart Disease: What You Don't Know May Kill You', which brought attention to the leading cause of death in U.S. women, heart disease.



[Frank Sacks](#)(Nut.), JoAnne Manson(Epi.), and Paula Johnson(Epi.)

VanderWeele's recent book publication

- [Tyler VanderWeele's](#) book, "Explanation in Causal Inference: Methods for Mediation and Interaction" was published by Oxford University Press.

Whole Grains Study Linked to Lowered Mortality

- [Eric Rimm](#), [Michelle Holmes](#), [Walter Willett](#), and [Frank Hu](#) were all lead authors on a study linking increased consumption of whole grains with decreased risk of death by up to 15%. The study appeared online January, 5, 2015 in [JAMA Internal Medicine](#).

De Vivo Published in BMJ

- [Immaculata De Vivo's](#) research on 'Mediterranean diet and telomere length in Nurses' Health Study: population based cohort study' was published in BMJ at the end of 2014. The study concluded that greater adherence to the Mediterranean diet is associated with longer telomeres. The paper is ranked in the top 5% of all BMJ published papers!

CCDD Director serves on Ebola Team B

- [Marc Lipsitch](#) of Epidemiology/[CCDD](#) and IID is serving as a member of the Ebola Team B as well as co-author of the new Report: "[Recommendation for accelerating the Development of Ebola Vaccines: Report & Analysis](#)". The report urges that early vaccines should be tested in clinical trials, as more than one vaccine may be needed at a time.

Statistical Science dedicates issue to the work of James M. Robins

- The November 2014 issue of [Statistical Science](#) was devoted to papers on causal inference and semiparametric models, topics that have been the focus of Robins' research and to which he has made notable contributions throughout his career. The papers are written by authors who have collaborated with or were otherwise influenced by Robins, including fellow IQSS faculty affiliate [Tyler VanderWeele](#).

Jordan Smoller book release

- Congratulations to [Jordan Smoller](#) and [Sylvia Wassertheil-Smoller](#)! The 4th edition of their textbook, "Biostatistics and Epidemiology: A Primer for Health and Biomedical Professionals" was released in 2015.



Epi students at Flann O'Brien's

John Graunt Society Social Event

On February 26th, students from the Department of Epidemiology gathered at Flann O'Brien's to enjoy a Happy Hour Social. Who would want to miss out on 2 for 1 appetizers while discussing stimulating Epi topics? Check out [twitter](#) for more social events!

Epi Student and Postdoc Accomplishments

- [Ashley Buchanan](#) recently joined [Donna Spiegelman's](#) statistics team as a postdoctoral fellow. She is coming to us from UNC Chapel Hill with a Dr.PH in Biostatistics.
- Postdoc [Po-Ru Loh](#) is first author on a newly released Nature Genetics paper, "[Efficient Bayesian mixed-model analysis increases association power in large cohorts](#)".
- Research Associate [Hugues Aschard](#), along with Department members [Peter Kraft](#), [Alkes Price](#), and [Amit Joshi](#), have a new paper published in AJHG on "[Adjusting for heritable covariates can bias effect estimates in genome-wide association studies](#)".
- Research Associate [Erica Warner](#) received two grants: Robert Wood Johnson foundation Seed Grant, and her KO1 application was selected by the National Cancer Institute.
- [Ellen Caniglia](#), [Lauren Cain](#), and [Sara Lodi](#) will be attending the [19th International Workshop on HIV Observational Databases](#) in Catania Sicily starting on March 26th. This workshop gives researchers the opportunity to present their research in a closed meeting format.

Funding/ Career Opportunities

- The Rose Traveling Fellowship Program in Chronic Disease Epidemiology and Biostats will be accepting [applications](#) for the Spring 2015 round until **April 1, 2015**. Applications should be emailed to [Megan Marchese](#).
- Check out the [NIH's Standard Due Dates](#) for grant submissions. K, F, and R Series renewals, resubmissions and revisions all have upcoming March and April submission dates.
- [Ragon Institute Summer Program](#)– This 8-12 week research training program brings in students to work on a customized HIV-related research project in one of the Ragon research groups. The application deadline for this program is **March 30, 2015**
- [Post-doctoral Fellowship](#)– Bioinformatics/ Computational Biology @ Center for Disease Dynamics, Harvard Chan School
- Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship– Epidemiological Modelling @ South African Centre for Epidemiological Modelling and Analysis at Stellenbosch University. Email [Wim Delva](#) to apply.
- [Biostatistician position](#) open in the Epi Prostate Cancer Team.
- [Postdoctoral Fellowship](#) position is available in [Donna Spiegelman's](#) group for 'Diabetes Prevention Intervention Research in India'.



Rose Fellow recipient Megan Diamond worked on identifying risk factors for diabetes in Tanzania

Upcoming Spring Dissertation Defense Schedule

Check out these amazing dissertations topics from our SD candidates in the Department of Epidemiology

Zhonghua Liu– March 9th, 10:30am FXB– G11, "Plasma Metabolites and Body Mass Index in US Men and Women of European Ancestry; Novel Statistical Methods for Analyzing Multiple Phenotypes in Genetic Association Studies"

Mingyang Song– March 26th, 1pm SPH2 Rm 317, "Adiposity and cancer risk: a life course approach"

NaNa Keum– April 17th, 10am SPH2 Rm 317, "Energy Balance and cancer risk"

Spring Seminar Series



[JoAnne E. Manson](#)



[David Siscovick](#)



[Michelle Holmes](#)



[Elsie Freeman](#)



Jori Barabino at the Patriots Super Bowl Parade



Laura Severse presented at the National Council for University Research Administrators



Jessica's farewell party



'Jessica & the boys'

Department of Epidemiology Seminars and Special Events

Spring 2015

March	11	Translational Epi	David Wilson <i>Global HIV/AIDS Program Director Health, Nutrition and Population Global Practice World Bank</i>	12:30-1:30	Kresge 502
April	1	Joint Epi & MCH seminar	Carol J. Rowland Hogue, PhD, MPH <i>Jules & Uldeen Terry Professor of Maternal & Child Health Professor of Epidemiology Director, Women's and Children's Center Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University</i>	12:30-1:30	Kresge 502
	8	Translational Epi	Vikrant Sahasrabudhe, MBBS, MPH, DrPH <i>Assoc. Investigator, Div of Cancer Epidemiology & Genetics National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health</i>	12:30-1:30	Kresge 502
	16	Joint Epi & EH seminar	Joel D. Kaufman, MD, MPH <i>Professor, Env. and Occ. Health Sciences Professor, Epidemiology Professor, General Internal Medicine Department of Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences School of Public Health, University of Washington</i>	12:30-1:30	FXB G13
	17	Joint Epi & EH seminar	Anna Wald, MD, MPH <i>Professor, Division of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Department of Medicine and Departments of Epidemiology and Laboratory Medicine University of Washington Member, Vaccine and Infectious Diseases Division Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center</i>	12:30-1:30	FXB G12
May	6	Cutter Lecture	161st Cutter Lecture on Preventive Medicine Dame Valerie Beral, DBE AC FRS <i>Cancer Epidemiology Unit University of Oxford</i>	4:00-5:00	Kresge G1 (Snyder Auditorium)
	13	Translational Epi	K. M. Venkat Narayan <i>Ruth and O.C. Hubert Chair of Global Health Professor of Epidemiology and Medicine Hubert Department of Global Health, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University</i>	12:30-1:30	Kresge 502

Upcoming Events in Epi

March 9, 12:30pm, Kresge 907– Hot Topic in Cancer Epi; Discussing the recently published paper by Tomasetti and Vogelstein in [Science](#) Journal

March 19, 12:30-1:30pm, Kresge 110 -Faculty Lunches have been reinstituted by Dean [Julio Frenk](#). The next presenter will be Epi's [Caroline Buckee](#).

March 29-30 All Day, SPH– [Annual Outreach Conference to Increase Diversity in Mathematical Modeling & Public Health](#)

April 10, 1:30-4:45pm, G2/FXB Atrium– 13th Annual Jonathan Freeman Symposium on Infectious Disease Epidemiology. Afternoon talks will take place in G2, and the Poster Session and Reception in the FXB Atrium

April 10, All Day– The **3rd Annual Youth & Public Health Conference**- an event designed to encourage young students from diverse backgrounds get excited about the field of Public Health. Contact [Erin Comerford](#) if you are interested in volunteering.

Mondays (3/23, 3/30, 4/6, 4/13, 4/27) 5:30-8:00 pm- Power and Differences workshops; A dialogue-based workshop structured to explore identity, culture, discrimination, and social justice

Take the Stairs Campaign- [Registration](#) opens Friday, 3/6/2015. The Campaign begins Monday 3/23/2015!



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Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Department of Epidemiology
677 Huntington Ave, Kresge 902
Boston, MA 02115
hsph.harvard.edu/epidemiology

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Eric DiGiovanni - edigiova@hsph.harvard.edu

(Ideas for submission or comments are always welcomed)

Contact The Department of Epidemiology

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Department of Epidemiology
677 Huntington Ave, Kresge 902
Boston, MA 02115
hsph.harvard.edu/epidemiology

Tel: 617-432-1050

Editorial Board: Eric DiGiovanni & David Vaughn